



5. The system of claim 1, wherein said agent and said intermediary are capable of authenticating each other prior to establishing said secure communications therebetween.

5 6. The system of claim 1, wherein said manager and said intermediary are capable of authenticating each other prior to establishing said secure communications therebetween.

7. The system of claim 6, wherein said agent is capable of  
10 providing a password to said intermediary for subsequent comparison by said intermediary with a password provided by said manager.

8. The system of claim 6, wherein said agent is capable of  
15 providing said intermediary with a identifying data, said intermediary capable of providing said identifying data to said manager, and said manager capable of authenticating said intermediary based upon said identifying data.

20 9. The system of claim 1, wherein said manager is a web browser and said intermediary is a web server.

10. The system of claim 1, further comprising a first data  
25 pathway between said agent and said intermediary and a second data pathway between said intermediary and said agent, wherein at least one of said first and second data pathways is comprised of the Internet.

11. A method of remotely servicing a secure computer  
30 system, comprising:

receiving, by an agent of said secure computer system,  
said directive to be executed from said intermediary over a  
second secure communications pathway; and

12. The method of claim 11, further comprising establishing  
10 said first secure communications pathway by said agent  
conveying intermediary-identifying data to said  
intermediary, and said intermediary conveying intermediary-  
identifying data to said manager.

14. The method of claim 11, further comprising establishing  
20 said second secure communications pathway by said agent  
conveying agent-identifying data to said intermediary.

15. The method of claim 11, further comprising establishing  
said second secure communications pathway by said  
25 intermediary conveying intermediary-identifying data to said  
agent.

16. The method of claim 11, wherein said establishment of said first secure communications pathway between said manager and said intermediary comprises using a web browser as said manager and accessing a web server as said intermediary.

returning, by said agent, results of an executed directive to said intermediary; and

18. A remote servicing system intermediary for a secure computer system, comprising:

19. The intermediary of claim 18, further comprising memory for storing a password received from said secure computer system for use in validating said manager.

20. The intermediary of claim 18, wherein said intermediary is operative to block pending receipt of said directive to be executed from said manager.

21. The intermediary of claim 18, further comprising a digital certificate to be conveyed to said agent and to said manager for authenticating said intermediary.

22. The intermediary of claim 18, further comprising an access database for defining which secure computer systems communicable with said intermediary said manager may define  
5 directives for.

23. The intermediary of claim 18, wherein said intermediary is operative to receive results of said executed directive from said secure computer system over said second secure  
10 communications link and is further operative to convey said results to said manager over said first secure communications link.

24. A method of operating an intermediary for the remote  
15 servicing of a secure computer system, comprising:

providing a first digital certificate to an agent running on said secure computer system in response to a request from said agent for the purpose of authenticating said intermediary to said agent;

20 storing identifying information received from said agent;

providing a second digital certificate to a manager in response to a request from said manager for the purpose of authenticating said intermediary to said manager;

25 receiving said identifying information from said manager for the purpose of authenticating said manager to said intermediary;

receiving, from said manager, a directive to be executed by said agent; and

30 forwarding said directive to said agent for execution.

25. The method of claim 24, further comprising:

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receiving results of said executed directive from said agent; and

forwarding said results to said manager.

5 26. The method of claim 24, further comprising:

storing a list of secure computer systems communicable with said intermediary and for which said manager may define directives to be executed.

10 27. The method of claim 24, further comprising:

15 establishing a first secure communications pathway between said intermediary and said agent in response to said agent authenticating said intermediary based upon said provision of said first digital certificate from said intermediary to said agent.

28. The method of claim 24, further comprising:

20 establishing a second secure communications pathway between said intermediary and said manager in response to said manager authenticating said intermediary based upon said provision of said second digital certificate from said intermediary to said manager and in response said receipt of said identifying information from said manager by said intermediary.

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